

Lesson 4. Be My Witness – Pt. 1

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall **be witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature... And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover... And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.” Mark 16:15-20

1. God has Given us a Job to Do

- i. What does Jesus command us to do in Mark 16?
 - Go and preach (proclaim) to everyone, everywhere
- ii. What should people see happening through us?
 - **cast out demons in Jesus’ name**
 - **speak with new tongues**
 - **poison will not effect us**
 - **the sick will recover when we lay hands on them**
 - **the Gospel is proclaimed**
 - **the Word is proven through accompanying signs**
- iii. Jesus came with the same purpose as He mentioned in Mark 16 and has passed the baton on to us.
 - Look up **John 18:37** and write down what His cause was. bear witness to the truth.
 - He was (& is) from Heaven and came to earth reveal that truth and bring as many to Him as would accept Him. (Sounds something like Acts 1:8, eh?)
- iv. Be the answer to His prayer.

I was born to witness to the truth

“A Cause”

a principle, ideal, goal, or movement to which a person or group is dedicated

This is a discussion that the author of ‘Things Unseen’, Mark Buchanan had with one of his professors:

“One day on one of our visits, I asked him what it had been like knowing Karl Barth. Dr. Bockmuehl had, many years before, had a personal association with the redoubtable Swiss theologian, who had done so much to re-establish the authority of Scripture and the sovereignty of God in a theological world rotted through with liberalism. Dr. Bockmuehl told me one story.

“I saw Barth many years ago,” he said. “I sat with him, wondering what to say. Then I thought to pay him honour. So I said, ‘Dr. Barth, you have done so much to turn back the tides of liberalism. When you are gone, I pray that God will raise up another to do what you have done.’ Barth fixed me with his eyes.”

Bockmuehl fixed me with his eyes.

“‘No, don’t pray that,’ he said, ‘You do it.’”

Excerpt from ‘Things Unseen’, pg. 196, Mark Buchanan

- Jesus prayed for us before He left this earth, and continues to intercede for us (Romans 8:26,27,34). We must learn to walk in His ways so that the world will believe and know Him.

(John 17:20-23) I’m praying not only for them but also for those who will believe in me because of them and their witness about me. The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind— Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, So they might be one heart and mind with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me. The same glory you gave me, I gave them, so they’ll be as unified and together as we are— I in them and you in me.

Then they'll be mature in this oneness, and give the godless world evidence that you've sent me and loved them in the same way you've loved me. (Jn. 17:20 MSG)

- Unity of the church and the indwelling of His Spirit are what bear witness of Christ to the world.
- God has commissioned us to ‘Go out’. This is not a question for us to seek His will on, it is a command. When we become followers of Jesus, we are part of His following; part of His cause.

2. He does not expect us nor want us to do it on our own!

i. Read Luke 24:49

Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry (wait) in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

- the word ‘endued’ means to be clothed (to sink into clothing, put on, clothe one's self)

ii. Remember, we have died to ourselves so that Christ may live through us. (Philippians 1:21)

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

iii. We cannot BE a Christian without Christ.

- This may seem like a given, but how often do we operate in our own strength & abilities? We need to submit to ‘Christ in us’ and allow Him to operate through the Holy Spirit

iv. The Father’s work is quite often beyond our natural abilities

- we can _____ reach out and touch to bring relief & aid & comfort to others
- but we must remember that we also wrestle against spiritual forces and things that we do not (yet) or cannot understand. (see Ephesians 6:11-19)

... Put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, ... Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand... praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit...

This sounds like the baptism in the Spirit! ‘Put on the whole armour of God’ sounds a lot like; be endued with power and ‘pray in the Spirit’ sounds like tongues ... hmmm, I’m just thinking out loud!

Yes, we are made in His image and with incredible abilities, but most often the work of God goes beyond what we can humanly accomplish. The empowering of the Holy Spirit is to enable us to do more than we are humanly able to do.

v. We are in a partnership with God.

We seek, He speaks.

We listen, He instructs.

We knock, He opens.

We obey, He is released through us.

(See John 2:5 - His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you.")

3. He Equips us Personally & with Purpose

It’s so wonderful to know that when God comes, He comes 1st to us as individuals. He knows the right circumstances, the right approach and the right words to speak to our hearts. He is so intimately interested in you & I that He does His work 1st in our hearts before sending us out to others. Our job initially is to seek Him

and give Him Lordship by asking Him to occupy us. He then has the ability to save us, empower us, and commission us for His Cause.

I have been in many anointed environments over the years, but it has only been as I’ve uncrossed the arms of my heart (so to speak) and entered in, that I have experienced those times of intimacy. God is kind. He is NOT a dictator. He will display Himself, but will not drag me to Him. I must appropriate (to take to or for oneself; take possession of). I must enter in.

He comes to:

- save us
- sanctify us
- bring us close to Him
- empower us to be His witnesses

Let’s talk about how we do that?

- i. 1st of all, we must ‘put off’ fear and allow faith to rise. (2 Timothy 1:6,7)
 - We may be afraid to receive because of what we’ve seen. Unfortunately, too many of us have seen the selfish desires of man take over the displaying of spiritual gifts. We have either seen or experienced abuse of God’s precious gifts to us.
 - We may simply be afraid of the unknown.
 - o Familiarize yourself with God’s Word. Get to know Him, for He is good and only gives good gifts.
 - o Take an honest look at yourself and make sure that pride isn’t standing in the way for fear of what you may look or sound like. Pride is often the source of fear.
 - One of the strongest tactics that the enemy uses is fear. Do not give him this liberty in your life.

Let’s read Philippians 4:5-7

Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

With this scripture I encourage you to do the following:

- i. **ASK.**
 - Make your request known. Ask Him to baptize you with His Spirit.
 - Do as He leads you.
 - a) In order for Him to fill you, He may need to empty you and may bring something to mind that you need to confess & repent of.
 - b) He may ask you to do something like kneel or raise your hands, etc. He may not.
 - c) It’s just important to listen to His voice. There really is no formula.
- iii. **RECEIVE.**
 - Receive what He wants to give you. Tell Him so. Wait on Him. Soak in His presence.
 - Know that He will confirm His word in you. He promised.

- Be at peace. This is not something you manufacture or need to stress about; this is something God gives you by faith in His way and in His timing. You simply need to receive it by faith. (Hebrews 11:1)

iv. **RELEASE.**

- We release what the Holy Spirit wants to do by acting in faith.
 - a) Remember Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
 - b) We must do our part and do as He asks us to.
- Receive in faith. Open our mouths to worship and allow God to take over.
- Continue to thank Him for His Word and His faithfulness to it. Appropriate.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Colossians 3:1

Homework:

Read:

- Romans 12:3-8
- 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
- Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:27-31
- Galatians 5:22-25